Shortage of young officers in the Army

2371. SHRI O. P. KOHLI: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the newsitem which appeared in the 'Times of India' dated the 1st July, 1997 under the caption "Army's plight where have all the captains gone?";

(b) if so the reasons for the shortage of young officers in the Army; and

(c) the steps taken to remedy the situation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI N. V. N. SOMU): (a) to (c) Judging from the number of applicants for officers vacancies at the induction level, it can not be said that the career in armed forces has become less attractive resulting into shortage of officers at the junior level.

With a view to attracting eligible qualified youth in large number for taking up Army Service as a career, the Government have decided to launch a comprehensive Image Projection Campaign with the help of professional media agency.

Various measures have been initiated to make up the shortage in the officer cadre such as, University Entry Scheme, exemption from apprearing in Combined Defece Services Examination for NCC 'C' Certificate holders and Short Service Commission Officer (SSCO), induction of women as officer, promotion of serving JCO/ORs into the newly created Special Commissioned Officer (SCOs) Cadre for JCOs/ORs.

The Fifth Central Pay Commission has recommended improved pay scales, allowances and concessions to the Armed Forces Personnnel in their report submitted to the Government. The Government after due consideration of the Grievances of the Armed Forces personnel have decided to improve upon some of the Pay Commission recommendations.

It is expected that the above steps will improve the situation to a great extent.

कच्छ में सशस्त्र बल प्रशिक्षण केन्द्र

2372. **श्री अनन्तराय देवशंकर दवे :** क्या रक्षा मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि :

(क) क्या सरकार के पास कच्छ में थल सेना, नौसेना और वायु सेना प्रशिक्षण केन्द्र स्थापित करने संबंधी कोई प्रस्ताव विचाराधीन है;

(ख) यदि हां, तो उक्त प्रस्ताव की अद्यतन स्थिति क्या है;

(ग) क्या वायु सेना प्रशिक्षण के संबंध में भुज विमान पत्तन सर्वाधिक उपयुक्त है और इस प्रयोजन हेतु इसका विस्तार करना जरूरी है;

(घ) क्या सरकार प्रशिक्षण केन्द्र को सुचारू ढंग से चलाने के लिए कच्छ में एक सैनिक अस्पताल की स्थापना करने का भी विचार रखती है; और

(ङ) यदि हां, तो कब और यदि नहीं तो इसके क्या कारण हैं ?

रक्षा मंत्रालय में राज्य मंत्री (श्री एन० वी० एन० सोमू) : (क) जी, नहीं ।

(ख) प्रश्न नहीं उठता ।

(ग) भुज एयरपोर्ट के अंतर्राष्ट्रीय सीमा के निकट स्थित होने के कारण इसे वायुसेना के प्रशिक्षण के लिए उपयुक्त नहीं समझा गया है ।

(घ) जी, नहीं ।